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Date: April 29, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061  
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Re: Docket # 98N-1038, "Irradiation in the Production, Processing, and Handling of Food"

To whom it may concern:

I understand that the FDA is considering changing the current regulations for labeling of irradiated food. As a consumer, I want to know if the food I buy has been irradiated or not, and I want the label to be clear and easy to understand. Labels should say "treated with radiation" or "treated by irradiation", and should include the radura symbol. The label should be clearly visible on the front of the package, or in a prominent spot in the case of fresh produce.

I have read that FDA is considering using the term "pasteurization" in referring to irradiated food. I think this is completely misleading to consumers. While it may be technically correct, most people seeing "pasteurization" on the label will think the food has been treated with heat, not with radiation. The purpose of labels is to inform the public, not to mislead. I understand that many people think the public is uneducated about radiation and therefore shy away from buying irradiated food. However, I believe there are still many unanswered questions concerning the effects of radiation on food, and I want the right to make my own choices concerning such technology.

For those who believe the public is uninformed, the response should be to educate them, not to mislead them with ambiguous labeling. It is very important to me as a consumer that food labeling be as accurate and informative as possible.

Yours truly,

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